



Press Release

How green is your city?

People from across Europe will have an exciting opportunity to hear about their city and towns' environmental progress during Green Week, 1-5 June, following a European Commission initiative to raise local awareness of urban environmental issues and activities. These events, called **Urban Green Days**, will focus on local actions.

Margot Wallström, European Commissioner for the Environment stressed the importance of raising environmental awareness: *"We need to understand the environmental issues that face us – so that we can solve them together"*.

Cities and towns involved in Urban Green Days events will be reporting to local people about the work being done by them on essential activities such as recycling, energy saving, water supply and consumption, transport and construction. Last year's Urban Green Days saw several cities involved in events, from Fairtrade cafes and markets, exhibitions of home recycling kits, and energy efficient lighting, to presentations by local councillors on topics ranging from waste to climate change.

Last year, Aberdeen, UK, held a very successful Urban Green Day with around 4,000 people participating in a vast array of activities dedicated to everyone - young to old. People were given an opportunity to inform themselves on a range of environmental topics, and purchase „green products“ such as home compost bins and low energy light bulbs. Children could play different green games, get their faces painted or make bird-feeders. Two fuel-efficient cars used by the City of Aberdeen were also on display.

Güstrow, Germany has been holding Urban Green Day events for the last ten years. They have become a tradition, with festivals and discussion forums focussing on a variety of topics for sustainable living.

These events, said Margot Wallström, illustrate that *"Everyone must help to protect our environment – we are all responsible for everyday decisions which can make a world of difference to the quality of our environment"*.

Positive impacts expected are greater public awareness of urban environmental activities, and encouragement for people to engage in positive action in their local areas, as well as exchange and inspiration between cities.

The events taking place this year will be listed on the Urban Green Days web site www.urbangreendays.org, alongside further information for local governments who wish to hold an event, and for the media.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is co-ordinating the initiative on behalf of the European Commission, Directorate-General Environment.

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